REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1, 9, and 22-25 are amended. The amendments are made to even more clearly recite the claimed invention and do not add new matter and are fully supported by the specification. Support for the amendments to the independent claims may be found, for example, on page 30, line 2, through page 31, line 6 and page 11, lines 9-17, of the present specification. Reconsideration of the rejected claims in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Foreign Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f)

Initially, Applicant notes that the Examiner has not acknowledged Applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f) to Japanese Application No. 2002-357268, as well as receipt of the certified copy of the priority document, which were filed on December 9, 2003. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests acknowledgement of Applicant's claim of priority and receipt of the certified priority documents.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Office Action rejects claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Specifically, the Examiner maintains that the specification does not support the term "on-hand" in claim 9. Without agreeing with or acquiescing to the rejection, Applicants note that claim 9 has been amended to recite a "portable display device" (rather than an "on-hand display device"), as described on page 30, line 2, through page 31, line 6, of the present specification (e.g.,

portable game apparatus 200). Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 6-16, and 22-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Aonuma (U.S. Patent No. 6,821,204, hereinafter "AONUMA"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Initially, Applicants note that the claims recite (using claim 1 as a non-limiting example):

> A video game apparatus that advances a game when multiple players move their player characters in a virtual space, comprising:
> multiple input devices that correspond to each of the multiple players and receives input instructions for each player character according to an operation of each player;
> a player character mover that moves each player character in the virtual space based on the input instruction;
> an object mover that moves an object in the virtual space;
> a display controller that causes a display device to display a part of the virtual space with reference to the object;
> a position judge that determines a positional relationship between each player character and the object and demarcates a zone centered around the object with a predetermined radius; and
> a game progress controller that changes at least one of a degree of advantage of a game progress and a degree of ease for each player character according to the determined positional relationship of each player character,
> the display controller causing the display device to display the object at a center and the part of the virtual space with reference to the object.

In contrast, AONUMA is directed to a "game system that displays a 3-D game screen and a 2-D map screen for representing a 3-D game space" (AONUMA, Abstract). AONUMA teaches a plurality of objects in the 3D game space, including a plurality of

player objects P, enemy objects, and cursor objects (as shown in Figure 5 of AONUMA); the player objects are controlled by player input via game controllers.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner argues that these features correspond to the claimed multiple input devices, player character mover, and object mover (*see, e.g.,* page 3 of the outstanding Office Action). The Examiner also argues that AONUMA discloses that the "game uses 3D object 32b and stage data 32c to create a game space on a television screen and the LDC of the GBA (GameBoy Advanced) that is only a small portion of the virtual world contained in the game (Aonuma: col. 8, lines 29-39); therefore meeting the limitation of a 'display controller' as described by the applicant" (*see, e.g.,* page 3 of the outstanding Office Action).

However, AONUMA does not teach "a display controller that causes a display device to display a part of the virtual space with reference to the object...causing the display device to display the object at a center and the part of the virtual space with reference to the object" because in AONUMA the displayed game space is based on the position of the player characters (rather than "with reference to the object") and the object is not centered on the screen, as recited in claim 1. Even if the Examiner argues that the player character is an "object" and the portion of the 3D space is based on the position of the player object, the claims distinguish player characters and objects. For these reasons alone, Applicants submit that AONUMA does not teach each and every feature of the claimed invention, as required under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), and respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejections.

Furthermore, the Examiner argues that AONUMA teaches that "[t]he 2D map displayed on the display of the GBA provides a means to determine the positional relationship between each player and objects like enemies and structures (AONUMA, Fig. 7)" (*see, e.g.,* page 3 of the outstanding Office Action). However, AONUMA fails to disclose a "position judge that ...demarcates a zone centered around the object with a predetermined radius" (as described on page 11, lines 9-17, of the present specification), as recited in independent claim 1 (and similarly recited in claims 22-25). For at least these reasons, Applicant asserts that AONUMA fails to disclose each and every element of the claimed invention, as required under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Furthermore, Applicants note that the system in AONUMA fails to disclose or appreciate advantages stemming from the claimed combination of elements (as discussed on page 3, lines 23, to page 4, line 4 and page 20, lines 8-25, of the present specification). For example, the claimed invention allows each player character to move in the virtual space freely without positional restriction. Furthermore, the size of each of the multiple player characters on the screen may be enlarged; each player is capable of seeing the progress of the game on a large screen without screen dividers or separations for each player character; and each player character can moves the displayed area of virtual space in order to facilitate game progress. Applicants submit that the claimed combination of features facilitates, *inter alia*, the aforementioned advantages over AONUMA, and the system in AONUMA fails to disclose or appreciate any of the aforementioned advantages.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that AONUMA fails to teach each and every element of the claimed invention, as required under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (or appreciate the advantages of the claimed combination of features). Applicants respectfully request

reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and an indication of the allowability of all of the claims in the present application. Furthermore, allowance of the dependent claims is deemed proper for at least the same reasons noted above for the independent claims, in addition to reasons related to their own recitations.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 2-5 and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over AONUMA in view of "E3 2002: Zelda Game Cube-to-GBA Link Revealed" (hereinafter "E3 2002") and in further view of "The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time" IGN Review (hereinafter "IGN Review") and Banjo2553 (Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time FAQ, hereinafter "OOT FAQ").

For the reasons provided above, Applicants submit that AONUMA fails to disclose all of the elements of the claimed invention. As the Examiner merely relies upon E3 2002, IGN Review, and OOT FAQ publications to teach the "lock-on" feature of the Ocarina of Time game, these publications do not cure the aforementioned deficiencies of AONUMA. Therefore, Applicants submit that AONUMA and the E3 2002, IGN Review, and OOT FAQ publications (either alone or in any proper combination) fail to disclose, suggest, or render obvious all of the elements of the claimed invention, and respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejections.

Lastly, dependent claims 2-20 are submitted to recite further patentable subject matter of the invention and, therefore, are also submitted to be allowable over the prior art of record. As such, allowance of the dependent claims is deemed proper for at least the same reasons noted above for the independent claims, in addition to reasons related to their

own recitations. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and an indication of the allowability of all of the claims in the present application.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the Examiner' s rejections should be withdrawn. Entry and consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action, and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and are believed to be appropriate.

Although it is within the discretion of the Examiner to enter amendments made after a Final Office Action, Applicants submit that the amendments do not raise new issues, and should not necessitate a new search, as the claim amendments clarify that which was argued in the last filed response. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner enter the present response. Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present invention in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

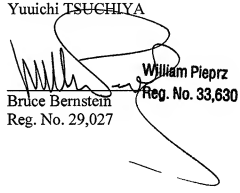
Applicants note that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Commissioner determine that an extension of time is required in order to render this response timely and/or complete, a formal request for an extension of time, under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), is herewith made in an amount equal to the time period

required to render this response timely and/or complete. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required extension of time fee under 37 C.F.R. §1.17 to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,
Yuuichi TSUCHIYA



Bruce Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

May 23, 2008
Greenblum & Bernstein, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, Virginia 20191
Telephone: 703-716-1191
Facsimile: 703-716-1180